

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before

H E R M A J E S T Y

T H E

Queen Dowager,

In Her Chappel at *Somerset-House*, upon
the Fifth *Sunday* after *Easter*,
May 9. 1686.

By *WILLIAM HALL*, Preacher in Ordinary
to His M A J E S T Y.

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On Rogation-Sunday, May 9. 1686.

Amen, Amen, dico vobis, Si quid petieritis Patrem
in nomine meo, dabit vobis.---Petite & accipie-
tis, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum. *Job.* 16.
23, 24.

*Amen, Amen, I say to you, If you shall ask the Fa-
ther any thing in my Name, he will give it you.---
Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be
full.*

OUR Blessed Saviour, in that incompara-
ble Sermon at his last Supper, (of which
his Beloved Disciple *St. John* has given
us a Copy, from his thirteenth to his
seventeenth Chapter) reads a Lesson to his Apo-
stles

B

files, of the highest importance to their future Conduct and Comportment. He exhorts them with an Eloquence Divine in its Original, an Eloquence Divine, in its Force and Energy, to the performance of many things, as hard and difficult, as they were necessary to be put in practice. Besides the Command he gave them of loving one another, and that according to the measures of the Love he bore them; *Sicut dilexi vos* : He gave them a clear and ample View, a full Prospect of all those Pains and Afflictions, of all those Torments, of that Death they were to undergo for his sake. He acquainted them with the nature of their Sufferings, with what they were to endure from the Jews and Gentiles, who would both combine, (like as *Herod* and *Pilate* to the Death of our Saviour,) in the Contrivance of such exquisite Torments, as should put a period to the Lives of the Apostles, with the most intolerable Pains, that could possibly be invented. The Jews would think themselves obliged to destroy them, as Impostors, as Preachers of a false and pernicious Doctrine, a Doctrine so opposite to the Tenor of their Belief, as that was, of their *Messias* being already come, whom they, obstinately blind through Ignorance, as gross as criminal, expect even to this day. The Gentiles would perform their utmost Endeavours, to offer up these Men a most acceptable Sacrifice to the Divinities they ador'd, inasmuch as the Apostles

ffles were to wage War against them, to become their profess'd and irreconcilable Enemies. I need not mention with *St. Chrysostom* upon this place, the rest of the Contents of this great Sermon of our B. Saviour: I need not give you a more copious Account of his farther Orders or Commands. You know how he encourag'd them, to raise themselves above the Concerns or Cares of this World; He press'd them to an assimilation or likeness in Holiness, to his Heavenly Father: He did not bid them aspire only to the Sanctity of Angels, Cherubins or Seraphins, of any of the seven ministring Spirits that stand before God; they were to bear up to the Eternal Father, and from thence to take a pattern of Perfection. You know how he enjoyn'd them, not only to acquire such Vertues as were to adorn or embellish themselves, but to plant them in the Souls of others, to prescribe Rules and Methods of a new Life, of a new Belief, to preach Penance, Afflictions, Crosses, Persecutions even to death, to Men indulging themselves all sorts of inordinate Pleasures: to preach Poverty of spirit at least, as absolutely necessary to Salvation, to Men boundless in their Riches, boundless in their Desires of scraping them together, by all means possible, good or bad; to preach Humility to the Proud, Patience to those that brook not Affronts, Chastity to the Impure, Temperance to the Glutton; to controul lawless Usurpation

and Tyranny; to level immoderate Flights of Ambition; to transform the Idolaters of Vice, into the Admirers and Profelytes of Vertue; In a word, to transplant Men from Sin to Grace, from Grace to Glory. It was very hard for the Apostles, before whose clear view was plac'd such a Scene or Landskip of future Events, so disagreeable to Sense and corrupted Nature, not to be discourag'd, not to shrink back, not to cry out as upon another occasion, *Quis ergo poterit salvus esse?* *Who is it then that can be saved?* Our B. Saviour therefore, who well knew how easily Men are deter'd from doing good, even at the distant view of ensuing Dangers, to animate and encourage his Disciples to an Enterprize, so highly conducing to their own Advantage; that they might not be disheartned or dismay'd at the mighty Task, after he had convinc'd them in his precedent Discourse, that there was nothing that lay under his Commands, but what was so far from being not feasible, that it was easie, confers upon them more sensible Encouragement in the Verse foregoing that of my Text. In which he promises to give them unconceivable Comfort and Consolation in the midst of all their Troubles and Afflictions; and then for the obtaining of it, in the words of my Text advises, exhorts, nay commands them to have recourse to Prayer, as the necessary Means to render all Burdens light, all Yokes sweet, all Labours

Matth 19.
25.

bours and Pains easie. *Amen, Amen, dico vobis; si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis.— Petite & accipietis, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum.* Amen, Amen, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father any thing in my Name, he will give it you. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. As if he had said (as St. Chrysostom remarks), You must not think you must rely upon your own strength, to surmount the Difficulties you are to encounter with: You must implore in your daily Prayers the Assistance of Heaven, and you'll never fail of its Protection. *Petite & accipietis*, Ask and you shall receive, offer up your Petitions to the Father in my Name, and he'll bless your Endeavours, he'll strengthen them with his all-surmounting Grace, he'll enable you to withstand and overcome whatsoever would obstruct your Proceedings. *Petite & accipietis, &c.* Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Since therefore our Holy Mother the Church, in a Season sacred to Prayer, do's propose to her Children the Gospel, wherein our Saviour encourages his beloved Disciples, to addict themselves to that holy Exercise, as being the only Source or Origin from whence flows the fulness of joy in this World, and the assurance of the ineffable Bliss of the World to come; I think it will not be unseasonable from the words of my Text, to exhort you likewise (O. Christians) to apply yourselves with joynt consent, with united affection and

Chrysost.
Hom. 23.
in Matth.

and fervor, to the devout and holy Exercise of Prayer; and that, not for these ensuing Days only, wherein we are more strictly engag'd by the Church to pay our respective Duties to Almighty God, the better to dispose us on *Thursday* next to ascend with *Christ* in Spirit into Heaven, and prepare us to entertain that supreme Author of all Sanctity and Grace, the Third Person of the ever Blessed *Trinity*, who descended upon the Apostles in fiery Tongues, and will come to enflame our Souls with the fire of Love; but during also the series or continuance of your Days; to the end, that by addicting your selves to an Employment, as necessary as advantageous to a Christian, your joy may be full, *Ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum.* To this purpose I design, God willing, this day to set before you in the First Part of my Discourse, the Excellency of Prayer, together with the Advantages you may reap from it. In the Second, the absolute Necessity of Prayer, with a short Method how to Pray as we ought. *Amen, Amen, si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis, &c. Amen, Amen, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father any thing in my Name, he will give it you. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.* But that God may bless and crown my Endeavours, that he may seal this solemn Promise of granting what we ask, and make it good in My behalf, I must desire you to joyn your Prayers with mine, that what I shall say

say, may be to his Honour and Glory, to the good of all our Souls. And to this end let us with our best Devotion implore his Divine Assistance, by the Intercession of the most Holy Virgin-Mother, *AVE MARIA*, &c.

I Am throughly persuaded (D. A.) that there cannot be given a more elevated Idea of the *Excellency of Prayer*, then by shewing, 1. That it came from *Heaven*. 2. That it conducts us to *Heaven*. 3. That it makes us find *Heaven* upon Earth. 1. Part.

1. It came from *Heaven*, where it was even before the Heavens, before those material Orbs, that now rowl over us, were call'd from the dark, and profound Abyss of unessential Nothing: Before the Angels were establish'd in Glory, God himself was taken up with *Prayer*; not as the word commonly signifies with us, *Petition* or *Impetration*, in as much as that Supreme and Independent Being could neither *Pray* in this Sense to others, or make such Addresses to it self. His *Prayer* was the *Contemplation* of his own Divine Essence: His *Prayer* was that *Expression* or *Consubstantial Word*, which from all Eternity, as an Eternal, Coeternal Beam shone from the Father: His *Prayer* was and is a *Reflection* upon his own unlimited Perfections, in that compleat Resemblance of himself, his Son.

When this *Word* descended from the Bosom of his

his Eternal Father without either Change or Separation, to cloath himself with our Flesh in the chaste Womb of the Virgin-Mother, I find he came among us to teach us what he put in practice himself, the holy Exercise of *Prayer*. It is written of his House, that it is to be Consecrated to Divine Service or *Prayer*: *Domus mea Domus Orationis vocabitur*. And which was his first House, but the Womb of his Virgin-Mother, where he dwelt nine Months in that divine Employment? The first Chapter of his Prayer-Book, or first Lesson he read, was to comply with the sacred Decrees, with the holy Will of his Eternal Father, as the Royal Prophet says of him, *Psal. 40. 10. In capite Libri scriptum est de me, &c. In the beginning of the Book it is written of me, that I should do thy will*. I'll follow thy Orders, my God, I'll engrave thy Law in the middle of my Heart.

Matth. 2. 18.

When he came into the World at the appointed time, he employ'd in that holy Exercise of *Prayer*, the space of Thirty Years. This Light of the World shed not a Beam upon benighted Man, he broke not from the sacred Cloud whereinto he had retir'd, *Nubes latibulum ejus*, till the Revolution of that time was ended. And as if he thought it not enough to spend whole Thirty Years under the Roof of *Mary*, he repairs to a Desert, a lonely and melancholly Desert, where for Forty Days and Forty Nights, not granting his Body the satisfacti-

Job 22. 14.

on of the least Repast, free from the noise and bustle of the World, he is totally addicted to *Contemplation*. Our B. Saviour was as well God as Man; he needed not, by consequence, a private House or Desert to become more recollected, more retir'd; 'twas to give us an Example, to teach us where we ought to Pray, that he chose those solitary Places; 'twas to encourage us to an imitation of his holy Life, to render our Prayers more efficacious, more meritorious, he selected such Conveniences as might be an help to our Prayers. Methinks he acquaints us with his divine Intentions from the Desert, with an *Exemplum dedi* Joan. 13. 15. *vobis; I have given you an Example, that you do as I have done.* Ah! my Lord, 'tis too much honour for such poor Creatures as we are, to be permitted to address our Prayers to thee; but what a happiness is it to be invited to Pray in Company with our God?

When he left the Desert, he left not the practice of Prayer; he quitted not this sacred Employment in the midst of the most pressing Concerns of his Mission: And altho' he equally Pray'd in all Places, and at all Times, the Evangelists have taken a particular care to acquaint us, that after he had labour'd and toyl'd all the Day in Preaching, Teaching, and inviting Sinners to a sincere Repentance, he employ'd the most part of the Night in the Practice of Prayer; *Erat pernoctans in oratione Dei.* Luc. 6. 12.

As he liv'd in a continual Exercise of Prayer, he expir'd upon the Cross (as we may say) in the Arms of Prayer; he consecrated to that purpose the three last hours of his Life; he drew the Curtains of the Night upon the face of this World, he shrowded it with darkness more seasonable, more proper for *Prayer*. Ah, what comfort must a serious Meditation upon those three last mysterious Hours our B. Saviour was dying in upon the Cross, bring to the Soul of a repenting Sinner! He made there an Application of his most bitter Passion, of his most dolorous Crucifixion, of his most painful Death to the Distempers of our diseased Hearts. He Prayed then, that as the whole Series of his Life was spun out for our Good, for our Instruction; so his Death for our sakes might conduce to the entire Remission of our Sins. He offer'd the infinite Price of his inestimable Blood for the Redemption of Mankind. He begg'd of his Eternal Father to cancel the Debts we had contracted, to blot out of his remembrance our Transgressions, at the same time that he interceded at the Throne of his Mercy for the blind and ungrateful Jews.

Pater ignosce illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt. Nor may we doubt, but as he pour'd forth his Soul in Prayer with his last Breath, saying to his Eternal Father, *Into thy hands I commend my spirit*; so he bequeathed the Spirit of Prayer as a Legacy to us, both to accompany and secure our Exit out of this Life;

Luc. 23.
34.

Luc. 23.
46.
C

Life; and the bowing of his Head to us at that time, is an Invitation to us to lift up our Hearts to him; *Inclinatio capite pemitte spiritum.* Ah my dearest Saviour, I receive with the most profound Submission possible, with the greatest Veneration, thy Holy, thy Divine Spirit; I embrace it as bequeath'd me by my most tender Master; I'll cherish this *sacred Depositum*, this divine Pledge of an infinite Love; I'll carefully preserve it to the end of my days; for 'tis then I desire to die, when I cease to Pray.

2. If Prayer came from *Heaven*, as we must needs allow, since it was brought us from thence by the Worlds Redeemer, it glories in a Prerogative more to our advantage; that is, it leads and conducts to us *Heaven*. 'Tis the property of Water, to remount to a Level with its Source or Origin. Prayer therefore taking its rise in Heaven, we must attribute to it an Excellency common to it and Grace; *Omnis qui bibit ex aqua hac, fiet in eo fons aquæ* Joan. 4. 14. *salientis in vitam æternam.* If any one drink of that delicious Spring, which pious and religious Souls so frequently refresh themselves with in the holy Exercise of Prayer, it shall become in him a Fountain, whose Waters shall reascend as high as their Origin, as high as *Heaven*, to that inexhaustible Ocean of ever-living Waters. *Quid est oratio,* (says to this purpose the great St. *Augustin*;) *nisi ascensio animæ de terrestribus ad cælestia, inquisitio superno-*

rum, invisibilium desiderium? For what is *Prayer*, but an elevation of the Soul from terrestrial to celestial Cogitations, an inquisition or search into supernatural Concerns, a fervent desire of purchasing that Happiness, which is as yet out of sight. 'Tis for this Reason that Prayer is compar'd to the Ladder *Jacob* the Patriarch saw in a Vision: As that gave an ascent from Earth to Heaven, as those mysterious Rounds bore the mounting Angels to their Sovereign Lord; so Prayer wings our earthly lumpish Nature, that we can soar aloft to the Region of Spirits; and to this purpose it refines our Humanity from all dregs of Mortality. As our Lord was seen leaning upon the utmost Rounds of this mystick Ladder, or rather (as the *Septuagint* give a more congruous Construction) as the Ladder was seen leaning upon our Lord that supported it; so Prayer derives its efficacy, its vigour and force from the gracious assistance of an all-powerful God, who both raises and draws its Votaries to himself. Finally, as there were in *Jacob's* Vision seen *ascending* and *descending Angels*, they are yet upon the same Concern for Christians devoted to Prayer. They carry our Petitions (as *St. Hilary* saith) to the Throne of Glory, they return to minister for us in the great work of our Salvation. The Soul likewise upon the Wings of Prayer takes her flight to Heaven; she enters into the Palace of her Lord without controul or disturbance, (Prayer being

being the Key of Paradise (saith S. *Augustin*) which gives her admittance into the Royal Bed-Chamber, where she freely entertains her self with an infinite Majesty) she becomes familiar with her God, she not only obtains his Blessing as her Father, disarms his just Indignation against her own, and the Worlds Offences, atones for her self and others, but addresses her self to him as her dearest Friend, appropriates him to her as her Beloved, with the Spouse in the *Canticles*; *Dilectus meus mihi, & ego illi*. Insomuch that our Sovereign infinitely delighted with such familiar Addresses, invites, encourages, and engages the Soul to continue her languishing Desires. *Fac me audire vocem tuam*; Let me hear thee speak. *Vox enim tua dulcis*; For thy Voice is sweet and charming. *Labia tua sicut vitta coccinea, & Eloquentium tuum dulce*; Thy Lips are like a Thred of Scarlet, thy Speech is sweet and grateful. Such was the Prayer of *Moses* upon the Mount, where he made up to God as to his best of Friends, Discoursed with him face to face, so much to the advantage of the glorious Saint, that one would have thought the Almighty had interchanged Properties with him; for he seems to tie the Hands of an Omnipotent God, that was ready to dart his revenging Thunder at the criminal Heads of the rebellious Jews. *Dimitte me*, (saith the Almighty) *ut irascatur furor meus*; Let me alone, that I may give way to my anger. As if he were

Cant. 2.
16.

8. 13.

Cant. 2.
14.
4. 3.Exod. 32.
10.

were unable to resist the Influence of the Prayers of *Moses*.

3. But we have not only the advantage of being conducted to *Heaven by Prayer*; 'tis also blessed with a singular Privilege, that it makes us find *Heaven upon Earth*. To evidence this Truth, let us settle our serious Consideration, let us fix our Regards upon such devout Christians, as are given to *Prayer*. We see they are disencumbred from the Bustle, or troublefom Concerns of this World; we see they are intirely divorc'd from the Creature, totally united to the Creator; we see they are dead to the Life of the World, living a divine or supernatural Life; dead to themselves, animated with the Life of God. Ah happy Death! Happy end of a Life well lost! Thrice happy beginning of a Life, that must never end! The union of Body and Soul is the Life of a Man, the separation of the Body and Soul is the Death of a Man; The union of the Body and Soul with the World, is the Life of a Worldly Man, the Death of a Christian; The separation of the Body and Soul from the World is the Death of a Man as to the present World, but the Life of a Man in reference to the World to come. Men living with the Life of the World, are dead to Heaven; Men living or leading their Lives in *Prayer*, find Heaven even in this World, inasmuch as they are dead to the World, to live with God, to live with the Angels with the Life

of God : they are penetrated with God, they are absorpt in God ; they are chang'd by a thrice happy Transformation into God himself. But this Death to the World, ought rather to be stild a *Resurrection* then a *Death* : A *Resurrection* with their divine Original *Christ Jesus*, from the Grave of this World. Those that are risen with *Christ*, have their Affections taken off from the things here below, they favour nothing but what's above. Those by consequence that are devoted to Prayer, are risen with *Christ* ; have a Heaven upon Earth with *Christ* not yet ascended ; will mount with *Christ* from Earth to Heaven.

If the Angels, our Guardian-Angels, to whose care and custody Man, as yet a Traveller, is recommended by God ; if they that keep us in all our ways, that direct our steps through the Mazes of this World ; if they that are so much taken up with our Concerns, as that they are continually upon the Watch, upon the Guard, to secure us from that roaring Lyon the Devil, seeking to devour us ; if they notwithstanding are at the same time bless'd with the beatifical Vision, if they see God, enjoy Heaven upon Earth, certainly there is some proportion between *Souls* in Prayer, and *Spirits* upon Duty ; betwixt *Souls* rais'd above themselves upon the Wings of Devotion, and *Spirits* below themselves upon Matters of Obedience : if we have regard to the Concern they are engag'd

in, their *Heaven* must be upon *Earth*. If we look upon the *Soul* as confin'd to the Body, she has at least an Antipast of that Bliss these *Spirits* are perfectly possess'd with, since she commences here an Exercise, that must never end: She beholds the face of God, by *Prayer*, who is to be the Object of her Happiness for all Eternity. Do not we thus enjoy *Heaven* upon *Earth*? do not we thus partake of the Happiness of Angels? *Prayer* comes from *Heaven*, *Prayer* leads to *Heaven*, *Prayer* makes us happy with *Heaven* upon *Earth*. *O quam suavis est, Domine, Spiritus tuus in nobis*; O my Lord and Saviour *Christ*, how sweet is thy *Spirit*? How beneficial is the *Spirit* thou hast left us, the *Spirit* of *Prayer* which thou hast recommended to us?

From the Excellency of *Prayer*, and the Advantages we reap by it, 'twere easie to conclude the Obligation incumbent on us, as we tender our eternal Welfare, of having a constant recourse to so Religious an Employment: But because among variety of Motives, it may so fall out by the Order of Providence, that some of them at least may conduce, as well to stir up those that will not yet grant themselves so much leisure, even as to think of future Happiness, as to encourage those that are already bent upon the Inquiry, I shall now proceed to shew the *Necessity* we have, and the *Manner* how we are to *Pray*; which is the Subject of my Second Part.

Saint

Saint *John Damascen* defines *Prayer* to be an II. Part.
 Elevation of the Mind to God ; in which we either
 beg to be deliver'd from Evil, or invoke his assistance
 upon our selves or Neighbours, to embrace
 what's Good ; or pay to him our Homage as our
 Supreme Lord, our Sovereign King. 'Tis evident
 from the First Part of the Discourse, that the Mind
 is elevated to God by *Prayer* : the Explication there-
 fore of the Sequel of this Definition shall be a preg-
 nant proof of the Necessity we are in, of making
 such Addresses to him, as that we may alleviate the
 Burden of our Troubles in this World, we may
 invite the celestial Influence of his Grace upon
 our selves and Neighbours, we may acknowledge
 him as we ought, as we are oblig'd, to be our chief
 Good, our *ultimate* or *last End*.

We are not, I am fully persuaded, unacquainted
 with the Miseries we, as mortal Men, are liable or
 subject to. *Homo brevi vivens tempore repletur* Job 14. 1.
multis miseriis, (said *Job*, who had found the truth
 of his Assertion by experience) ; *Man living but a*
short time, is full of many miseries. We know there
 are *Miseries* that oppress the *Soul*, *Miseries* that af-
 flict and torment the *Body*. The *Miseries* of the
Soul are *many* : She is blind, erroneous, ignorant
 in the Operations of her Understanding ; she is de-
 prav'd in her Will, which is bent upon Evil, which
 is obstinate, perverse, malicious ; at the best, more
 prone to acquiesce to the Suggestions of *Sin*, then
 D comply

comply with the previous Motions of *Grace*: She is corrupted in her *Judgment*, decay'd in her *Memory*; she is weak and feeble in all her Faculties. Add to these domestick Evils, these in-born *Miseries*, those she suffers from abroad, those she suffers from the *World*, from the Allurements of the *Flesh*, from the Suggestions of the *Devil*. She is betray'd to the World, by the *Concupiscence* of the Eyes; she is a Slave to Sensuality, by the *Concupiscence* of the *Flesh*: The Devil Lords it over her, by engaging her, through his Wiles, into *Pride of Life*. What must she do to be deliver'd from this intolerable Oppression? Whose assistance must she call upon? Whose help? She is closely besieg'd by her Enemies without, she is treacherously betray'd by her Domesticks within: *Inimici hominis domestici ejus*. To whom shall she have recourse for Succour or Relief? To whom but to the King, her Supreme Lord, her Sovereign, her God? To whom shall she send her devout *Sighs*, her penitential *Tears*, her assiduous and fervent *Prayers*? The Almighty gave her Orders, to call upon him in the day of *Affliction*; He promis'd her his Aid and Assistance, upon Condition she would attribute to him the Glory of the Victory, she would return him her Acknowledgments and Homage: *Invoca me in die tribulationis, eruam te, & Honorificabis me*. The Apostle grievously infested with an intestine War from the *Concupiscence* of the *Flesh*, cries out

Matth. 10.
36.

Psal. 49.
15.

out for help to crush the Rebel: *Infelix homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?* Unhappy, unfortunate Man! what Friend will deliver me from the Body of this Death? He do's not desire here; as in another place, a separation betwixt Body and Soul; he begs to be freed from the vicious Inclination of a deprav'd Appetite, which he calls *Corpus peccati*, the Body of Sin, from whence, as from a noxious and pernicious Root, spring up so many destructive Branches of inordinate Desires. *Quis me liberabit?* Who is it that will destroy this Body, this Body of Sin? *Corpus peccati*. He calls to mind the Promise of his Lord, and expects relief from the Grace of *Jesus. Gratia Domini Jesu Christi*. Invoke his Assistance therefore, beg he would extinguish the Rebellion of the Flesh. *Ter Dominum rogavi*. I have Petition'd thrice, replies the afflicted Soul, *Ut auferretur a me stimulus carnis meæ*. Neither were his Petitions unregarded; the Grace he receiv'd at the Instance of his Prayers, enabled him courageously to withstand all Assaults, repel all Temptations, to triumph over the Enemies that aim'd at his Ruine. *Sufficit tibi, Paule, gratia mea*. Rom 7.24.
Rom. 6. 6.
2 Cor. 12.
7.

If Prayer prove so necessary to the relief of the Soul, in the midst of Troubles, incompass'd, or rather oppress'd with the intolerable weight of *Miseries* and *Afflictions*; 'tis as absolutely requisite against the *Miseries* that fall upon the *Body*; the *Miseries* of the *Body* being as grievous, as afflict-

ing in some proportion, as those of the *Soul*. I need not call upon any other Witness then our own Experience, to manifest the truth of this Assertion. Since that *Sin* that was unfortunately hatch'd in the Garden of *Eden*, Man that was before Lord of this Universe, the Master of the World, has now the Universe, the whole World against him. Nature shook him off, as no longer her Darling, when once he had revolted from the Allegiance due to her Sovereign and Creator. The Heavens ever since have prov'd his Bane, in their malignant Influence. The Elements, that jarr and wrangle with one another, meet in the Composition of disloyal Man, not to end, but to continue their Quarrel ; that they, like *Samson*, may draw after their own, the Ruine of this *Philistine*. The Beasts, created for his use and service, over whom he was appointed Lord and Master, revolt by a joynt Instinct, that seems to transcend the reach of a Creature, guided only by the blind Impulse of Sense. The Beasts revolt, the Beasts rebel against him ; those that haue not Strength in proportion to their Hatred, do all they can to shun the detestable Object ; those that are able to master this common Enemy, never meet him but they devour him.

Were this the *Non plus ultra* of his Misery, it might be said, his Enemies were only such as were void of Reason : But ah ! unfortunate Man ! thou
art

art an Enemy to thy self, thou hast Man thy Enemy. One levels his Endeavours at the destruction of another. *In i:ineribus sæpe.* Often upon the Road (says St. Paul) *Periculis Latronum*, thy Life's in danger : *Periculis in Civitate*, as often in the City. If thou fliest to the Deserts, *Periculis in solitudine*, the wild and unhospitable Groves harbour thy Enemies. Put to Sea, *Periculis in mari*, thou hast Enemies at Sea. If thou return to thy *Friends*, thy *Friends* are false, thy *Friends* are Flatterers, thou art likewise in danger there, *Periculis in falsis fratribus*. Devil with Devil firm Concord holds; Men only disagree of Creatures rational: As if they were not assail'd by Enemies enough besides, they do their utmost to ruine one another. Where therefore must Man, miserable, unfortunate Man, seek for refuge against the united force of so many pernicious and malignant Enemies? Where shall he find a shelter from a Storm, that menaces his Destruction on all sides? Whither shall he run for succour? To God (saith St. Chrysostom) born up upon the Wings of Prayer: Let him flie to the Throne of the Almighty, far above these material Orbs, that surround us, far above the reach of an Invasion, either from the *Heavens, Elements, Beasts, or Men.* Let him enter *In locum tabernaculi admirabilis, usque ad domum Dei*; Let him enter into the place of the admirable Tabernacle, let him enter into the House of God, *Usque ad domum Dei.*

2 Cor. 11.
26.

Psal. 41.5.

Oratio

Ecd. 35. *Oratio humiliantis se penetrat nubes, & non discedet donec altissimus aspiciat* ; The Prayer of the humble penetrates the Clouds , and it shall not depart till the Almighty hath granted the Petition. Do the Heavens molest him ? Prayer (saith St. *Chrysostom*) has been a sure Fence against their malignant Influence ; *Plagas cœli irruentis delevit Oratio*. Prayer has appeas'd the anger of the Elements ; *Tempestates sustulit*. Prayer has tam'd the savage Beasts ; *Impetum Leonum cohibuit*. Prayer has compos'd the Differences of Men ; *Bella composuit, prælia removit*. Prayer has discover'd the Snares Men have laid to entrap one another ; *Insidias hominum, mala denique omnia delevit Oratio*.

*Chrysost.
Hom. 5. de
Incompr.
Dei Natu-
ra.*

But now again, as our Prayers are beneficial to our selves, so also are they to others. As they are a powerful Engin, by which we draw down Blessings upon the *Soul*, against the *Miseries* of the *Soul* ; upon the *Body*, against the *Miseries* of the *Body* ; they likewise are efficacious for the good of our Neighbours, whether Enemies or Friends. To instance in the First, as a more pregnant assurance of the efficacy of Prayer. Who was a greater Enemy to Christians then *St. Paul*, before his Conversion ? You are not, I suppose, ignorant of the Persecutions he rais'd against the Church in its Infancy, when he bore the *Name* of *Saul*, with the *Nature* of a greedy and ravenous Wolf, that thirsted after the Blood of the Lambs and Sheep, of that tender

tender and loving Pastor *Christ Jesus*. You know the bloody Designs he was bent upon, when our B. Saviour appear'd to him in the Way, with a *Saul, Saul, Quid me persequeris? Saul, Saul, why* Acts 9. 4. *dost thou persecute me?* Never Tyrant, the most inhumane Tyrant, was more violent against Christians, then *Saul*. The Fury he was animated with, answer'd the Cruelty of his Intentions: He was full of Menaces in his Mouth, of Rancour in his Heart, of Fire in his Eyes, of Weapons in his Hands. *Saulus spirans minarum & cædis.* Acts 9. 1. He travell'd from one City to another, to seize upon Christians, whom he loaded with Irons, whom he dragg'd before the Magistrates, whom he cast into Prisons; against whom he became as well Executioner as Witness. *Rapiebat, vastabat, sæviebat*, says the great *St. Augustine*. I do not exaggerate or enhance his Crimes, when I affirm they were without Bounds or Limits. *Saul* wag'd a bloody War, not against *Christians* only, but against *Christ* himself. As *Herod* fought his Death amongst thousands of *Innocents*, *Saul* aim'd at *Christ* amongst thousands of *Christians*; tho' neither could meet with the *Saviour* of the World. He escap'd *Herod* by his flight into *Egypt*: He could not be assaulted in Person by *Saul*, as being now risen from the Dead, as being at this time ascended into Heaven. And yet, O Crime never to be parallell'd! *Saul*, not satisfi'd with that ignominious, that painful Death
the

the Jews had lately put our Saviour to, extends his furious Rage even beyond the Grave; insomuch that our Saviour not brooking the Outrage, breaks even from Heaven into unusual Complaints, and dispensing no longer with that sacred Silence he had so strictly observ'd in this World, in the midst of his greatest Afflictions, reproaches *Saul's* unheard of Cruelty, from the Throne of his Glory, *Saul, Saul, Quid me persequeris?* Thus stands *Saul* a Criminal before us, a Criminal of the blackest die. Thus I have represented him with these Iniquities about him, to make a deeper Impression in your Souls of the prodigious Efficacy of *Prayer*, and by consequence of the great Obligation we have of Praying, as well for our Neighbours as our selves, as well for our Enemies as Friends. *Saul*, however here so black with Crimes, is for all this a glorious Saint, is in full possession of an eternal Kingdom, is reigning with *Christ*, is an illustrious Member of the Church *Triumphant*, is an Honour to the Church *Militant*. Whence proceeds so miraculous a Change, a Change of *Name*, a Change of *Nature*? A Change from *Saul* to *Paul*, from an extraordinary *Sinner* to an extraordinary *Saint*? From the *Prayers* of a Christian, from the Sighs, Tears, and *Prayers* of a persecuted Christian, a Christian persecuted by *Saul* himself, a Christian expiring under a Mountain of Stones thrown at him at the Instance of *Saul*; To the *Prayers* of
St.

St. *Stephen* we owe this prodigious Conversion. While the Jews animated and encourag'd by *Saul*, who ston'd St. *Stephen* with all their Hands, by taking care of all their Clothes, were answering to the cruelty of his intentions, the Saint lifted up his Hands and Eyes to Heaven, rais'd his dying Voice in a lamentable, but engaging Accent, and as if he had been the Eccho of his Lord upon the Cross, cry'd out to Him, as he did to his eternal Father, *Ignosce illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt*. His Prayers were heard in Heaven, *Jesus* saw the Suppliant, *Jesus* stood visible to the Saint, attentive to his Prayers, and granting his Petition. The Prayers of St. *Stephen* wrought the entire Conversion of St. *Paul*.

St. *Augustine*, whom we likewise must needs acknowledge a perfect Convert, at the Prayers and Tears of *Monica* his holy Mother; St. *Augustine*, I say, once the labour of her Womb, now the delight of her Soul, whom she brought forth a Sinner, and made a Saint, introduces our B. Saviour addressing himself thus to the great St. *Paul* before his Conversion: *O Saule, olim quidem te perdere debui, sed Stephanus meus oravit pro te*. *Saul*, I

*Aug. Ser. 1.
de Sanctis.*

should have destroy'd thee long ago, had not my *Stephen's* Prayers prevail'd so far, as to disarm my Anger against thee. O *Saul*, why dost thou persecute me? Thou art blindly bent against me and mine, and yet at the Intercession of *Stephen*, I'll

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create

create thee my Servant. *O Saule, lupe rapax ; O Saul*, thou ravenous Wolf, thou hast devour'd my Sheep: *Expecta paulisper, & digeres* ; Stay a while, and thou shalt digest what as yet over-loads thy Conscience. *Dicam plane*, (continues the great S. August. S. Augustine, a most delicious Flower sprung likewise from the Root of Prayer) *Elifus est filius perditionis, & erectus est vas electionis* ; The Son of perdition is thrown down, to rise up a Vessel of Election. *Nam si Stephanus sic non orasset, Ecclesia Paulum non haberet* ; For if Stephen had not Pray'd in this manner, the Church had never been honour'd with the Merits of Paul. *Sed ideo erectus est Paulus* ; But Paul was thus rais'd to that sublime Sanctity and Perfection, *Quia in terra inclinat^{us} exauditus est Stephanus* ; Because St. Stephen with bended Knees call'd not for Vengeance, but Mercy for Paul. *Sic auditus est Stephanus ut ejus oratione deleteretur peccatum, quod commisit Saulus* ; Heaven so far condescended to the Intercession of Stephen, that it granted an ample Pardon to the Crimes which Saul had committed.

I think, after such an Example, none ought to doubt of the absolute Necessity of Prayer ; of Praying for *our selves*, of Praying for the good of *others*. Heaven, that acquiesc'd to the Prayers of S. Stephen for St. Paul's Conversion, we may justly hope will never deny any thing, that conduces to the good of our own, or Neighbours Souls. *Petite & accipietis* ;

pietis ; Ask, and you shall receive. *Si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo dabit vobis* ; If you shall ask any thing of the Father in my Name (says the Son), he'll grant it to your *Prayers*. But since he intimates here a Method of *Prayer*, to be true to my Promise, and to render this Discourse as proficuous as my Time will permit, I'll supersede a farther Explication of St. *John Damascen's* Definition, to leave you in a few words the *Manner* how to Pray. *Si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis* ; If you ask the Father any thing in my Name, he'll grant it you.

Many Christians, notwithstanding the several Admonitions, the several Incitements they have received, to addict themselves to this devout, this holy Exercise of *Prayer*, notwithstanding that they are well instructed in the *Manner*, are still plung'd so far in the Cares and Concerns of this World, that they will not so much as afford themselves a Moment of their Time, though they steal whole Hours for Pleasure or Pastime, for an Employment as obligatory as proficuous. As many, if not more, (so predominant is Ignorance now adays over Spiritual Concerns) fall short of the *Method*, know not *how* to Pray : the most that do, find not Heaven to answer their Expectations, because they correspond not with their Prayers to its Desires. That I may not be wanting to the Necessities of all upon so great an Exigency, I shall in the Con-

clusion of this Discourse, Excite those to Pray, that *do not* ; I shall inform those of the *Manner*, that know not *how* ; I shall, to the best of my Endeavours, rectifie the false Measures others have taken of Praying *amiss*.

To this purpose, you flaming *Seraphins*, that veil your Eyes with your Wings, as not being able to bear that inaccessible Brightness, that is darted from the Countenance of an infinite Majesty ; That shroud with Wings your Feet, in awe and acknowledgement of the Greatness of God ; That have two Wings more to be ready upon Command ; That cover your *Eyes* with *two*, your *Feet* with *two*, that *Fly* with *two* : Give me leave to adapt your *Wings* to *Prayer*, to fit it for its appearance before the Throne of the God you adore. Let *Prayer* be a *Seraphin* amongst you, place her in your Quire, when her *Wings* likewise are fitted to her, when she burns with that Love you are inflamed with. *Seraphins* by Nature are all in *Love*, in *Love* with God ; their *Love* is incompatible, is inconsistent with Sin. That *Prayer* therefore admit not of Sin, is the first Condition. *Seraphins* veil their *Faces*, veil their *Feet*, in Consideration of Gods infinit Greatness ; of their own infinit Liteness or Lowness, in respect of his infinit Height, which is the Second Condition necessary to *Seraphical Prayer*. *Seraphins* ask nothing for us, but what conduces to the Honour and Glory of God ;
what

what tends to the Salvation of our Souls, the Third Condition. *Seraphins* Present their Petitions in the Name, through the Merits of *Jesus*, the Fourth Condition. *Seraphins* are always upon the Wing; *Duabus volabant*, the Fifth and Last Condition to make *Prayer* a *Seraphin*.

First then, that *Prayer* may fit it self for a *Seraphin*, Sin must be banish'd out of the Soul. *Si cor nostrum* (saith St. *John*, a *Seraphin* for Love, for the Love of *Jesus*) *non reprehenderit nos, fiduciam habemus ad Deum, & quicquid petierimus accipiemus ab eo*; If our Hearts or Consciences do not check or accuse us, if our Souls are not defil'd with Sin, *Fiduciam habemus*, we may have Confidence, we need not fear; our Petitions shall be granted, our Desires crown'd, our Prayers heard; we shall obtain whatever we ask. Our Consciences reprehend us (saith St. *Gregory*) as often as we Sin, as often as we swerve from the Commandments of God. Our B. Saviour states the Condition for the Advantage of *Prayer*, *Si manseritis in me*, If you dwell in me; If you live by *Grace* or *Charity* a Member of my Body, *Quodcunque volueritis petetis & fiet vobis*; Ask what you please, you shall obtain it. Do not therefore (D. Christians) rely upon your Prayers, if your Prayers are not grounded on the Innocence of your Lives. *Ne offeratis ultra sacrificium frustra*; Offer not up any more your Sacrifice in vain, (said God to the Jews, by the Mouth of his Prophet *Isaiab*;) I. Condition.

1 Joan. 3. 21.

S. Greg. Mor. l. 17. c. 11.

Joan. 15. 7.

Isa. 1. 13.

Isaiab;) Your Incense is an abomination to me : If you lift up your Hands to Heaven, I'll turn away my Face, because your Hands are full of Blood. *Lavamini, mundi estote auferte malum cogitationum vestrarum* ; Wash, purge, and cleanse your selves from the Defilements of Sin ; take from my sight your evil Cogitations. The great St. *Augustine* to this purpose addresses himself thus to a Sinner in Prayer ; *If God should say to a Sinner, Behold, you have call'd upon me, I come, but whither ? Where will you provide a place fit to entertain me ? Do you think I can brook Tantas fordes conscientia tuae ? such an unclean, such an unsanctifi'd Soul ? Should you invite a Servant of mine to your House, would not you, to save your Credit, take care to remove whatsoever is disgustful out of his sight ? Would not you make it clean, set it in order ? Certainly you would. Yet you have the confidence to invite me to your Soul, in the manner I now behold it, full of Rancour and Malice, full of Fraud and Rapine, full of Pride and Ambition, full of Anger, Lust, and Blasphemy ; to your Soul, the Center of Iniquities. If you have a mind God should enter to inhabit there, provide for his coming, cease to offend, implore his Pardon for your past Transgressions, begin to love him as the Seraphins do. Love is the Soul of a Seraphin ; Love ought to be the Soul of your Prayer.*

S. *August.*
Canc. 3. in
Psal. 30.

II Condi-
tion.

Secondly, Consider the Grandeur, the Majesty
of

of God ; Consider your self, how little, how like to nothing ; Consider what God is, Consider what you are. The *Wings* before the *Face* and *Feet* of a *Seraphin*, are these or the like Considerations. That *Seraphin* upon Earth St. *Francis*, Pray'd in this manner ; *Quid es tu dulcissime Domine Deus meus, quid ego vermiculus & pauper servus tuus ?* What art thou, my Lord my God ! What am I ! A worm, thy poor and wretched Servant. With what Patience, with what Humility, do's an innocent and poor Wretch wait at the rich Man's Door ? With what Submission do's he appear before him ? With far more Respect, with greater Awe should we beg an Alms at the Gates of God's Mercy. As the Eyes of a Handmaid or Slave are fix'd upon the Hands of her Mistress, as she reads from thence her Instructions what to do ; *Sicut oculi ancillæ in manibus Dominae suæ* : So should our Eyes stedfastly regard the Grandeurs of the Almighty, and from thence take an occasion to plead for our selves, till he is graciously pleas'd to condescend to the relief of our Infirmities.

Psal. 122.
2.

Thirdly, The *Seraphins* never Intercede for us at the Throne of Mercy, but in Matters that redound to their Maker's *Honour*, and the *Good* of us. Happy were the Christian Soul, that would thus state her Petitions ; Ah unfortunate mistake of many, that with the Sons of *Zebedee*, know not what they ask ! Some desire *Health*, some *Riches*, others

III. Condition.

others to be disencumber'd from the Burden of their *Afflictions*, some *Preferments*, *Dignities* or *Honours* ; But never consider, with profound Submission to the inscrutable Secrets of Divine Providence, whether the *Sickness* they labour under, the *Poverty* they are in, the *Troubles* they are oppress'd with, their *low* or *mean* Condition, be not more suitable to the Will of God, more conducing to the Salvation of their Souls. How many now are tortur'd with unquenchable Flames, for the abuse of that Health the Almighty in anger conferr'd upon them ? (For through a just Indignation he grants many Petitions, which he, according to the Dictates of his infinit Mercy, had most graciously deny'd) ? How many with *Dives*, want Water to cool their burning Tongues, who, had they been contented with a less sensible *Poverty* then that of *Lazarus*, would now have been Lodg'd in the *Bosom* of *Abraham* ? How many have falln headlong, like those Morning Stars, *Lucifer* and his *Associates* ; have set in an eternal Night, because with the Pinnions of an irregular Ambition, they endeavour'd to mount above their native Sphere ? How many had exchange'd the *Burden* of their temporal *Miseries* or *Afflictions*, had they born them with Resignation and Patience, for an *Eternal Weight of Glory* ? Many times the everlasting *Happiness* or *Misery* of a Soul is annex'd to a *Good* or *Bad* Petition. We ought not therefore to square our Requests according

according to the Dictates of our own inordinate Appetites, we ought to render them conformable to the Will of Heaven. But whatsoever we importune the Almighty for, let it be desir'd with profound Submission, in the *Name*, through the *Merits* of our Lord and Saviour *Christ Jesus*.

Fourthly, *Si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis.* ; If you ask the Father any thing in *my Name*, he will grant it you. He says we can do nothing without him ; *Sine me nihil* IV. Condition.

poteſtis facere. We can expect Salvation upon no other Account then his : Our own Merits avail us nothing, but by vertue of his Passion, and precious Blood shed for us upon the Cross. *Quicquid ex me mihi deest* (saith St. *Augustin*) *usurpo ex vic-* Joan. 15. 5.
August. in Manual. cap. 21.
scribis Domini mei Jesu Christi, quoniam misericordiae affluunt, nec desunt foramina per quæ Effluent. Whatsoever is defective in me, is supply'd from the Bowels of my Saviour's Mercy ; His Blood wants not Channels to convey it self to my Soul : It streams yet in greater abundance through his Wounds upon the Cross, then through his Pores in the Garden. Hence it is that our Holy, our Unering Mother the Church, concludes her Prayers, *Through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 'Twas he that Redeem'd us from the Slavery of Sin, He is the Door of Heaven, through Him we must enter, which we shall certainly do, if *Perseverance* crowns our Prayers.

V. Condi-
tion.

Lastly, *Perseverance*, represented in those *Wings* of a *Seraphin*, with which he is constantly upon Duty. *Christ* many times grants to our *Perseverance*, what he denies to our *Prayers*. The Apostles ran to the Sepulchre of our Lord, as well as *Magdalen*; but She only had the honour and happiness of seeing him in Person, because She stay'd. Had the *Cananean* left our Blessed Saviour at that sharp Repulse she first receiv'd, her Daughter had never been Dispossess'd: Neither had *Jacob* the Patriarch been bless'd by the Angel, had not he struggl'd with him till the dawning of the Day. God denies us many times, or seems not to hear us, to try our *Patience*, to make proof of our *Constancy* and *Perseverance*, to experience the Faith we have in him. He seems not to hear us at all Times, or upon all Occasions, to convince us of our own *Misery*, of what we are *our selves*, if left *to our selves*. *Grace* would lose its estimate or value, *Heaven* would sink beneath our Care or Consideration, if every Sigh or Tear, if a few Words, altho' the faithful Interpreters of a sincere Intention, could obtain what they ask at every turn. *Cælum vim patitur & violenti rapiunt illud*; We must storm the Empyreum, if we have a mind to gain it; We must endeavour to take Happiness by force, by force of a constant *Prayer*. None will ever have their Temples empal'd with a Crown of Glory, that have not persever'd in the Combat. *Nemo coronabitur, nisi qui legitime certaverit.* We

Matth. 11.
12,

2 Tim. 2.5.

We have had an Idea (D. Christians) of the *Excellency of Prayer*, of the *Advantages* we may reap from the constant Exercise of *Prayer*. We are convinc'd, I suppose, of the *Necessity of Prayer*; We have been furnish'd with the *Conditions* requisite for *Prayer*. If we admire it for its *Excellency*, we should embrace it as an *Advantage*; Nay, we ought to comply with so *necessary* an *Obligation*, since we are not ignorant of the *Manner* how to discharge ourselves. I was not Master of Ceremonies my self, when I plac'd *Prayer* amongst the *Seraphins*. A Learned Author tells us, That a Person constantly addicted to so pious an Employment, has not only the *Love* of a *Seraphin*, but likewise enjoys the Perfection of each *Hierarchy* of every *Quire*. He is a *Cherubin* in his *Knowledge*; a *Throne*, inasmuch as his *Soul* is the *Seat* or *Residence* of *God*, the *Temple* of the *Holy Ghost*; A *Domination*, in the Government of his *Passions*; A *Power*, in the Dominion over the *Infernal Spirits*; A *Vertue*, in his miraculous Life, in his Life of Miracles; An *Archangel*, in his *Heroick Enterprizes*; An *Angel*, in his *Prompt Obedience* to the *Commands* of his *Sovereign*; A Person, in fine, devoted to *Prayer*, is a wonderful *Epitome* of all *Heaven*. Who would not after this addict themselves to *Prayer*? That holy Bishop of *Geneva*, *St. Francis Sales*, taxes those that will not, of the want of common Sense. *But the foolish and unwise shall perish*, (saith the Psalmist); *Simul insipi* pgl. 43.
11.

ens & stultus peribunt. Men may be asham'd of their supine Neglect, in a Business of such Moment and Concern, while they shew themselves so eager in the pursuit of Toys and Trifles. If its charming *Excellency* do's not invite us, let its *Advantages* engage us, let its *Necessity* oblige us. For its Advantages (saith St. Ambrose) *Uberior est gratia quam precatio, semper enim Dominus plus tribuit quam rogitur* ; God is more liberal of his *Grace*, then we of our *Prayers* ; he always confers more upon us, then we require, then we look for or expect. *Abraham* desir'd a Son, and obtain'd over and above the Measure of his Petition, a numerous Progeny from his Loyns, a Progeny as numerous as the Stars ; Obtain'd a Blessing never to be mention'd but with Joy : The *Redeemer* of the World came from the propagation of his Seed. *Jacob* the Patriarch beg'd God would be pleas'd to furnish him with Necessaries, with Aliments for the Body, and was stor'd with Riches in abundance, was honour'd with the Company of *Ascending* and *Descending* Angels. *Solomon* Pray'd for Wisdom, and receiv'd *Omnia bona pariter cum ea*, An affluence of all good things with it. *Ezechias* Pray'd for his own Recovery, when sick to death, which was granted, with an addition of Fifteen Years, and the Promise of a glorious Victory over his Enemies. The *Samaritan* desir'd *Water*, but obtain'd *Grace*. The *Centurion* beg'd of our Blessed Saviour to restore his Servant's
Health;

Health ; Our Lord cur'd the *Body* of the *Servant*, and the *Soul* of the *Master*. The *Thief* upon the *Cross* desir'd only to be *remembred* when our *Saviour* came to his eternal *Kingdom* , whereas our most gracious Lord promis'd him on that very *Day* to place him in *Paradise*.

Add now to these *Advantages*, with those above mention'd, the strict *Obligation*, the pressing *Necessity*. A *Soul* without *Prayer*, is like a *City* in time of *War* without *Guards*, without *Walls*, without either *Food* or *Ammunition*, which the *Enemies* may take and *Plunder* as they please. *S. Augustin* and *St. Ambrose*, the greatest and *Learnedst* *Doctors* of the *Church*, both center in this *Opinion*, That a *Person* stands in as much need of *Prayer* as of *Grace*, to attain *Salvation*. *St. Ambrose* farther assures us, That *Prayer* is as much the *Life* of the *Soul*, as the *Soul* is the *Life* of the *Body*. Hence I rationally and evidently conclude, That as the *Soul* is essential to the *Life* of the *Body*, *Prayer* is as essential to the *Life* of the *Soul*. The *Body* without a *Soul*, is but a foul and ugly *Carcass*, the *Leavings* of a *Man*, the *Food* of *Worms* and the *Grave*. The *Soul* without *Prayer* is dead, detestable in the sight of *God* and his *Angels* , whose *Grave* will be the *nether Hell*, whose *Worms* those *Stings* of *Conscience* which shall never die. As we take all *Care* possible therefore to preserve *Nature*, the union of the *Soul* and *Body*; since we are not ignorant of the
Means,

Means, we ought to take all Care possible to preserve *Grace*, by a constant Exercise of *Prayer*. Should you deny your *Body* its necessary Food, the *Soul* takes Wing, and leaves the Skeleton; Should you deprive your *Soul* of the Sustenance of *Prayer*, *Grace* quits the barren, the inhospitable Soil; the roaring *Lion*, the ravenous *Wolf*, the infernal *Serpent*, each from Hell, every Beast of Prey, *Omnes bestiae sylvarum*, do not pass through only, but inhabit there. Let us *Pray* therefore always (D. Christians) as our Blessed Saviour has enjoy'd us, *Semper orare*; not always upon our Knees, with *Hands* erected, with *Eyes* lifted up to Heaven, that Ceremony at all times is neither necessary nor convenient: Let us *Pray* always, by a constant union of our Souls always with God: Let us *Pray* always, by doing what we do, for the sake of God: Let us *Pray* always, by bearing our Sufferings for God: Let us *Pray* always, by desiring what we desire, may redound to the Honour of God: Let us *Pray* always, by loving what we love for the love of God: Let us *Pray* always, in fine, by rendring our *Thoughts*, *Words*, and *Works*, constant Effects of *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*. *Prayer* then and *Grace* will be individual Companions: *Grace* will be acquir'd at the Instances of our *Prayers*; *Glory* will be the due Reward of *Grace*. *Gratiam enim & Gloriam dabit Dominus*; For the Lord (says the Psalmist) will give *Grace* and *Glory*.

Luc. 18. 1.

Psal. 18.
12.

Which God of his infinit Mercy grant to the *Prayers* of your most Sacred Majesty, to my *Prayers*, and to the *Prayers* of all that hear me, *In Nomine Patris & Filii & Spiritus Sancti*. Amen.

F I N I S.

